

Education and Libraries

SELECTED PAPERS OF
~~LOUIS~~ ROUND WILSON

Edited by

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Education and Libraries

Selected Papers by

LOUIS ROUND WILSON



Photograph by Harold "Chips" Weaver

Louis R. Wilson

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LOUIS ROUND WILSON

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Edited, with a Biographical

Sketch and Commentary, by

MAURICE F. TAUBER and JERROLD ORNE



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Contents

<i>Foreword by Robert M. Lester</i>	<i>vii</i>
--	-------------------

<i>Introduction: Louis Round Wilson</i>	<i>x</i>
--	-----------------

The Library in the Social Order

The Growth of the Libraries	3
The Public Library as an Educator	7
The Library in the Advancing South	14
The Growing Importance of Libraries	26
New Objectives for Southern Libraries	34
Restudying the Library Chart	53
Library Readjustment for Effective Adult Education	67

School Libraries

A Constructive Library Platform for Southern Schools	81
Standards for High School Libraries	93
Increasing the Significance of the School Library	99
Integration of Library Service with School Curriculum	113

College and University Libraries

The Place of the Library in College Life	125
The Library in Modern Education	133
The Emergence of the College Library	143

The Service of Libraries in Promoting Scholarship and Research	157
The Use of the Library in Instruction	174
The Significance of the Joint University Libraries	186
The Library in the Graduate Program of Institutions of Higher Education in the Southeast	195

Education for Librarianship

Training for Librarianship in the South	213
Research in the Field of Library Science	225
The Development of a Program of Research in Library Science in the Graduate Library School	228
Essentials in the Training of University Librarians	239
Historical Development of Education for Librarianship in the United States	252
The Impact of the Graduate Library School upon American Librarianship	268
The Challenge of Library Literature to Education for Librarianship	277

Publishing in the South

Print in the Service of the South	295
Publishing in the South	308
The Forward Thrust in Publication	319

Indexes

Subject	331
Name	343

Foreword

Within the covers of this book Librarians Orne and Tauber have brought together in convenient form a series of papers which reveal the thinking of one man who by devotion primarily to the printed word in its many aspects has helped largely to establish a profession of surpassing importance.

This one man, Louis Round Wilson, has shown how a librarian can be not simply a bibliophile occupied in the acquisition, care and keeping of books, but also a scholarly historian, an editor, a promoter and an administrator of large educational enterprises, and through all this a teacher, and a mover of the minds and hearts of men.

In his youthful days spent as a printer's devil, Louis Wilson first found fascination in the printed word, in its physical limitations and in its inherent significance. He became more than a type-setting printer. He found that the exactness of observation required of a printer was required no less of one who wished to have recorded in print the results of his observation and thinking.

The knowledge stood him in good stead when he went to college. He already knew the form, use, and import of words. He found suited to his natural cast of mind the steady classroom drill, under scholarly teachers, in the basic use of words: purity, propriety, and precision. He developed an ability to review his own composition, to practice the classical virtues of unity, coherence, and emphasis; to strive for excellence by removing the un-needed, the trite, and the commonplace. Here was training for a scholar, preparation for an editor. He taught school briefly and then left off teaching, with a realization that his interest was directly in books, that books in themselves created obligations as to presentation, protection, housing, handling, distribution—all of these essential to the diffusion of knowledge—and the promotion of understanding; that for such diffusion and promotion the printed word has been and still is, the